

YOUR HERO'S ACTIVE WANT EXERCISE: Introduction

The next step in creating your About Sentence is to describe an Active Want for your Hero:

In this 3-part exercise, I'll prompt you to brainstorm lists of wishes and "don't wants," and guide you to shape "active wants" from them.

In the next lesson, we'll brainstorm "scary" wants.

Finally, at the end of the Module, we'll pull everything together to identify the core Want for your Hero at the present time.

Your Hero's WANT drives the action in your story (life), because it fuels the choices s/he makes! In storytelling, the Hero may, or may not be aware of this Want - but, the Author knows that it is driving the Hero's choices.

Via the lessons in The Hero Wants... module, I'm guiding you toward identifying the core Want you have, so that you can use this awareness to channel your attention and choices in your daily life.

To pick up from the first module, here are some examples:

Mrs. Doubtfire is a story about a loving father with an irresponsible streak who wants to stay close to his children...

UP! is a story about a cranky widower withdrawn from life over the loss of his wife who wants to be left alone...

Dirty Dancing is a story about an idealistic teenager struggling to assert herself who wants to make her own choices...

YOUR HERO'S ACTIVE WANT EXERCISE 1a: 10 Minutes

Loosen yourself up by listing a speedy brain-dump of wishes and fantastical thinking!

Set timer for 5 minutes. Write everything and anything you can think of that you wish for your life. Huge. Trivial. "Impossible." Try to fill up the back of this page. GO!

DING! After 5 minutes end, take 5 minutes more and review your list.

Does anything come up repeatedly, maybe in multiple forms? Groups of my wishes fell under Home Base (I called it, "Nest"), Travel, Health, and Social Good/Charity.

NOTE ANY GROUPINGS OR PATTERNS:

THE THING ABOUT WISHES

I've wondered: is a wish just a want that one presumes is out of reach?

Example: I wish I had millions of dollars. I don't presently have millions of dollars, and I don't perceive how I might acquire millions immediately. In wishing this, it feels like the energy behind my wish boils down to resigned futility.

Ew.

Or, is a wish an invitation to dig deeper into a want?

Why do I wish to have a million dollars?

To do things without worrying about financial constraints: make art, decorate my home, donate to charities, support family, friends, causes. I wish I had limitless money to enable myself and others to feel bold in our aspirations:

- Want to make that movie? Don't let money stop you.
- Want to build and maintain a no-kill animal shelter and outreach programs? Lack of money will not be in your way.
- Want to build that custom motorcycle? Here's the dough. Do it.
- Want to set up a conservation easement for that parcel? This will cover the legal fees. Pursue it.

I guess I equate a million dollars with no limits and no excuses. One can't give in to fear of trying or fear of failure, because money is not a factor either way.

As I sit here, I realize I don't need one million dollars to face MY fears and excuses (in fact, the group of us are pretty tight day in and day out). Wishing for limitless funds is my way of wishing to bypass my hangups. Ha!

Does that mean that I secretly believe that growing beyond my hangups is ultimately out of reach? No, I don't accept that. Some of my internal conflict has been cyclical throughout my life, but I HAVE grown out of other hangups.

YOUR HERO'S ACTIVE WANT EXERCISE 1b: 15 Minutes

I've come to see a wish as a signal of a feeling I want. The wish I described above conveys "limitless" to me.

It made me realize I want to feel limitless in my creativity, to inspire others to tap into their own aspirations, and in connecting to others through stories and art.

And, if a million dollars or more comes with any of those, I'm cool with that.

Do any of your wishes feel totally out of reach? Name the wish(es) below, and name the feeling that would go with HAVING the wish.

WISH

FEELING

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

YOUR HERO'S ACTIVE WANT EXERCISE 2: 15 Minutes

The purpose of this exercise is to make a list of the things you don't want, so you can get clear about what you DO want.

What's been happening in your life that you are SO TIRED OF? Are there situations in your life right now that cause you stress, grief, pain, or frustration? List those puppies below.

Most often, our "do wants" are the exact opposite of our "don't wants." If you don't want financial lack, you do want financial abundance. If you don't want tension in your relationships, you do want harmonious interactions with others.

Everything that is on your "don't want" list above, write the opposite outcome in a list of "do wants" below.

YOUR HERO'S ACTIVE WANT EXERCISE 3: 15 minutes

The purpose of this exercise is to guide you to turn wishes and "Don't Wants" into Active Wants. It's time to stir up some Action Words!

You've mined wishes, feelings, and the opposites of your Don't Wants, now I'm asking you to identify DESIRED OUTCOMES in the form of VERBS from them. Here are a few samples...

WISH or DON'T WANT

*Wish I had more time...
*I always seem to come last on my list of To Do's.

*Wish I was rich...
*Sick of worrying about finances...

*Wish I had better job...
*I'm so tired of feeling stuck in my situation.

ACTION WORD or VERB

(TIME) to VERB

(MONEY) to be able to VERB

(FREEDOM?) (CONFIDENCE?)
to VERB

YOUR HERO'S ACTIVE WANT SUMMARY

Recipe for Hero's Active Want

Start with

WISH that carries the best feeling when you imagine it's yours.

Fold in

The opposite of your biggest DON'T WANT

Mix briskly with

WISH or WANT expressed as a verb.

BAKE!

Your Hero's Active Want =

Ding! Ding! Ding!

In the next lesson, we'll stir up your Hero's "Resistance."